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FM AMEMBASSY SANAA

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6606  
INFO RUEHZM/GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE  
RUEHAD/AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI 0966  
RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN 0087  
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO 0749  
RUEHDO/AMEMBASSY DOHA 0361  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC  
RHMFIS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL  
RHBVAKS/COMUSNAVCENT  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RHMFIS/CJTF HOA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANAA 000454

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FOR NEA/ARP AND PM ACTING A/S STEPHEN MULL

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/27/2017

TAGS: PREL MOPS MARR MASS YM

SUBJECT: SUPPORTING YEMEN'S REQUEST FOR ARMORED VEHICLES

REF: A. SANAA 406

- ¶B. SANAA 367  
¶C. SANAA 361

Classified By: CDA NABEEL KHOURY, FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

¶1. (U) This is an action request for the Department. Please see paragraph seven.

¶2. (C) As reflected in reftels, the Republic of Yemen Government (ROYG) has formally requested from the Governments of Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates the expeditious transfer of several hundred military armored vehicles to strengthen the ROYG's defense forces, particularly due to growing unrest in the north. According to ROYG contacts, Interior Minister Alimi personally transmitted a written request to King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz, and President Saleh personally contacted the UAE President to make the request. On March 25, President Saleh called CDA, pleading for USG support for the transfer of armored personnel carriers to stop the "bleeding" in Saada.

¶3. (C) The ROYG has yet to receive firm commitments for the requested equipment. On March 26, Interior Minister Alimi received a telephone call from Saudi Interior Minister Mohammed bin Naif, who said "we support you" and apologized for the longer than expected delay in providing support. The UAE only committed to send "armored sedans," which would not be appropriate for maneuvering among Yemen's mountainous, roadless terrain.

¶4. (C) The ROYG provided post with a copy of the separate requests sent to the SAG, UAE, and GOQ, which included:

Saudi Arabia: 400 armored personnel carriers (APC).

Qatar: 300 APCs.

UAE: 300 NIMR II APCs; 50 NIMR 6X6 cargo vehicles; 50 NIMR 4X4 cargo - 4 door vehicles 50 NIMR 4X4 cargo - 2 door vehicles.

¶5. (C) The ROYG also requested additional communications, weapons, and protective gear, which post will transmit to NEA/ARP Yemen Desk Officer separately.

¶6. (C) COMMENT: In recent memory, post has never seen

Saleh push so strongly for support nor be so frank with regional neighbors about Yemen's security deficiencies. His impassioned pleas reflect a growing concern with mounting government casualties in Saada, most of which are due to snipers and ambushes attacking unarmored or lightly armored convoys. Even before the current conflict, post recognized the lack of safe and reliable transportation for troops and included APCs in Section 1206 proposals for military assistance. The USG has also previously transferred excess M113s to the ROYG, but not in sufficient numbers to meet the current demand. END COMMENT.

¶7. (C) ACTION REQUEST: Post strongly urges that the Department approach the SAG, UAEG, and GOQ at appropriate levels to urge a quick reply to the Yemenis given the time sensitive nature of their request, and to express the USG's willingness to expedite approval for transfer of any U.S.-origin armored vehicles that they may wish to transfer to the ROYG.

KHOURY